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Volatility in Electoral Support for United Russia: Cross-Regional Variations in Putin's Electoral Authoritarian Regime

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Abstract

Grounded in the main theoretical approaches to the study of electoral volatility, this article examines cross-regional variations in the levels of volatility for UR in Duma elections over the period 2003-2016 which are juxtaposed with the level of volatility for the Kremlin's candidates in presidential elections. The main finding is that "regime-type" or more precisely "authoritarianism" is the key explanatory variable. Stronger authoritarian rulers are able to control regional elites and ensure the best results for UR by exerting administrative pressure on the voters. This reduces the level of volatility in support for UR. At the same time, economic and institutional explanations have a partial significance. Here, Duma elections differ from presidential elections which demonstrate a much lower degree of volatility and insignificance of economic factors.

Key words: elections, United Russia, cross-regional variations, volatility

Introduction

For Powell and Tucker note, volatility is especially important, because it is 'linked to one of the most fundamental issues in political science, namely stability' (2013, p. 123). As Mainwaring and Zoco stress, 'the level of uncertainty about who will govern and what kind of government and policies are likely, is attenuated with a stable party system and heightened with high volatility' (2007, p. 157). In systems with high levels of volatility, 'parties that were electorally significant in one election get crushed in the next, while new parties emerge. Thus, citizens are less likely to be able to identify what the parties are, and where they stand, with adverse consequences for programmatic representation' (Ibid). Moreover, as Birch observes, high levels of volatility 'reduces accountability – voters cannot "throw the rascals out" if the rascals no longer exist as a

unified group'(2003, p. 120), and it thwarts the institutionalization of parties 'by decreasing the level of long term commitment which politicians, activists, and voters have to their party' (Ibid).

In this study we examine cross-regional volatility in the electoral support for the Kremlin's "party of power", United Russia (*Edinaya Rossiya*, UR). Our study examines the volatility of support for UR over the period 2013-16, which includes all four of the Duma elections (2003, 2007, 2011 and 2016), since the party was formed in 2001. Whilst the Russian party system was highly fragmented and volatile during the Yeltsin era (1991-2000), by the middle of the 2000s an electoral authoritarian regime had been established under Putin, and the Kremlin's "party of power", United Russia (UR) had emerged as the dominant party (see Gel'man 2006, Reuter 2010, Reuter and Remington 2009, Ross 2011, Ross 2011a). In 2003, 2007 and 2016 UR won over two thirds of the seats in the Duma (a constitutional majority), and it gained a majority of the seats in 2011. Likewise, UR gained control over almost all of the regional assemblies, and the vast majority of regional governors are members of the party.

However, these impressive national level victories for UR mask important variations in the levels of support for the party at the regional level. Whilst the Putin administration has attempted to impose a power vertical in the country, there still remain important regional variations in electoral and party politics and in the types of political regimes which operate in the regions, which range from "competitive" to "hegemonic" authoritarian (Panov and Ross 2013). These variations in the type of polity have impacted on the electoral support for UR which is much higher in the more authoritarian regimes. Whilst there have been a number of studies which have examined cross-regional variations in electoral support for United Russia (Clem 2006; Marsh, Albert and Warhola 2004; Reisinger and Moraski 2009; Reisinger and Moraski 2010; White 2015), the study of regional variations in the *volatility of voting* for UR has not yet been addressed.

Following Pedersen (1983), we define 'electoral volatility' as changes in the levels of electoral support for UR between electoral cycles, which is calculated by 'adding the absolute value of change in the percentage of votes gained or lost by each party from one election to the

next, then dividing by two' (Mainwaring and Zoco 2007, 158). In this study we examine electoral volatility in support for UR not for the Russian party system as a whole.

In addition to our study of Duma elections we also examine cross-regional variation in the volatility of electoral support for the Kremlin's presidential candidates in the 2004, 2008 and 2012 campaigns. The juxtaposition of voting patterns in both types of elections will enable us to tease out some of the special features of UR's electoral support in the Duma elections. Although UR nominated candidates for the presidency (Putin in 2004 and 2012, and Medvedev in 2008), it is important to point out that these nominations came under the control of the Kremlin rather than the party. Moreover, we also need to take account of the fact that voting in presidential races are usually based more on the personal attributes of the candidates, than on their party affiliations.

We begin our paper with a brief review of cross-regional differences in voting for UR / UR-Kremlin candidates and volatility in their support across the regions. Then we turn to a discussion of the key theoretical approaches to the study of volatility in democracies and authoritarian regimes, which we argue have not paid enough attention to the relationship between "type of regime" and "level of volatility". Next, we present our empirical data and test some hypotheses, drawn from the theoretical literature. In the final section, we discuss the results of our analysis and outline the main findings. As noted above, our study focuses on electoral volatility during the Putin era, beginning with the first national elections which UR contested in December 2003 and finishing with the most recent Duma elections in September 2016.

Cross-Regional Variations in Voting for UR in Duma Elections, and Kremlin Candidates in Presidential Elections

As can be seen in Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2 there are fairly significant cross-regional variations in electoral support for UR in Duma and Kremlin candidates in presidential Elections.

[Table 1 about here]

[Figure 1 about here]

[Figure 2 about here]

As has been demonstrated by many scholars, regions with a larger share of non-Russians and a larger share of rural inhabitants will exhibit higher levels of support for UR which, is a result of the more effective administrative mobilization of the electorate in these regions (Panov and Ross 2016, see also Moraski and Reisinger 2003; Frye, Reuter and Szakonyi 2016; Golosov 2013; White 2016).

Moreover, a change in the levels of electoral support for UR in Duma elections across electoral cycles is also high. Voting for UR varied from a high of 64.3% in 2007 to a low of 37.4% in 2003. This has not been the case for presidential elections which exhibit a much lower level of volatility in support of Kremlin candidates, ranging from a high of 71.3% in 2004 to a low of 63.5% in 2012. We would argue that the lower levels of electoral volatility in the presidential elections can be explained by the more personalized pattern of voting in these elections, the strong levels of citizen trust in the institution of the presidency, and the popular support for Putin (which was transferred to Medvedev in 2008). At the same time, the lower levels of volatility in presidential elections do not entail lower levels of cross-regional variations.

For our study we use two sets of data: 1) UR's regional results in four Duma elections (2003, 2007, 2011 and 2016) in 83 regions; 2) The regional results for UR-Kremlin candidates in three presidential elections (Putin's victory in 2004 and 2012; Medvedev's victory in 2008) in 83 regions. Crimea and Sevastopol', in addition to a small number of ethnic regions which were merged with other regions in the mid-2000s are excluded. On the basis of these data, we calculate the modulus of change in the share of votes gained by UR or UR-Kremlin candidates between two consecutive elections (*volatUR*). The total number of observations is as follows:

1) volatUR_Duma – 3 sets of values for four consecutive Duma elections - 249 units of observation;
2) volatUR_Pres – 2 sets of values for three presidential elections – 166 units of observation

In order to check cross-regional variations in volatility, we also calculate the average values of the volatility for every region in Duma elections (it is the sum of all three values of volatUR_Duma divided by 3) and in presidential elections (it is the sum of two values of volatUR_Pres divided by 2). These results are presented in Table 1; and the degrees of cross-regional variation are displayed in Figure 3. It has to be stressed that although the level of volatility is much less in presidential elections than in Duma elections, the degrees of variation in volatility are almost the same in both types of election.

[Figure 3 about here]

As can be seen in Figure 4 there is no correlation between the average values of volatility in the Duma and presidential elections. The coefficient is negative (-0.115), and statistically insignificant. Consequently, there are significant cross-regional differences in the levels of volatility in these two types of election.

[Figure 4 about here]

Explaining Volatility

Studies of electoral volatility have tested 'three main groups of causal variables: economic changes, political institutions, and social cleavages' (Madrid 2005, p. 2). We would argue that whilst these theories have been developed to explain the electoral volatility of 'party systems', they can equally, and very productively, be applied to the study of volatility in voting for a single party – namely UR.

Aggregate economic voting. According to this approach 'voters punish or reward incumbent parties and officeholders for their relative success in managing the economy' (Roberts and Wibbels 1999). Over the period 2000-7 there was strong growth in the Russian economy which averaged 4-7% per annum. However, in 2008 Russia began to feel the negative impact of the world economic crisis. Oil prices plummeted and the value of Russia's exports fell. In 2009 GDP fell to -7.8%, and over the period 2009-13 there was an average annual growth rate of just 1.5% (*Russia Economic Report*, World Bank, 2017). In the wake of economic sanctions imposed

by the West, after Russia's annexation of the Crimea, there was a further steep decline in GDP which fell to 0.7% in 2014, -3.7% in 2015 and -1.2% in 2016 (Ibid). From the perspectives of this approach, support for UR should follow in step with changes in economic indicators; and this appears to be confirmed by the results for UR in the Duma elections (which rose from 37.5% in 2003 to 64.3% in 2007 before falling to 49.2% in 2011, with a slight recovery to 54.2% in 2016). However, support for Kremlin candidates in presidential elections which is much higher than in the Duma elections (71.3% in 2004, 70.2% in 2008 and 65.5% in 2012), has not followed such a clear path in line with economic developments. At the same time, there are huge regional variations in the levels of economic performance. Our cross-regional comparisons will allow us to evaluate the relevance of aggregate economic voting on the volatility of support for UR.

The structure of socio-political cleavages. From this perspective electoral volatility is linked 'to the structure of socio-political cleavages and their degree of organizational closure' (Roberts and Wibbels 1999). We would argue that this approach is less likely to be relevant to Russia, as political parties continue to have rather shallow roots in civil society and their support is not yet grounded in strong and stable social cleavages (see Korgunyuk 2015, Korgunyuk, Ross and Shpagin, 2017). Moreover, manipulation of the rules of the game by the Kremlin has made a major impact on the contours of the Russian party system (see discussion below) which has distorted the impact of socio-economic cleavages.

However, there are two well-known social factors which have been shown to influence the levels of electoral support for UR, namely, ethnicity and urbanization. As a rule, regions with a lower share of ethnic Russians and a smaller number of urban residents will provide more votes for UR (Panov and Ross 2016). Thus, for instance, the ethnically defined "national republics" in Russia have much higher levels of electoral turnout and demonstrate greater levels of electoral support for the "party of power", than voters in the territorially defined regions. For example, in the four Duma elections (2003, 2007, 2011 and 2016), UR won the following sequence of votes in the Republic of Chechnya: 79.8%, 99.3%, 99.4% and 96.3%, and in the three presidential

elections (2004, 2007 and 2012) the figures were; 92.3%, 88.7, and 99.7%. In the Republic of Mordoviya the corresponding figures were, for the Duma; 76.1%, 93.4%, 91.6%, 84.4%, and for the presidency; 91.3%, 90.3% and 86.9% (see Table 1).

However, it would clearly be absurd to define UR as a party of 'non-Russians' or a 'rural' political party. In Russia the impact of ethnic and rural cleavages on voting is not a direct relationship but rather is mediated by regime type. Thus, variations in the levels of support for UR need to be examined from a wider perspective which takes into account the nature of the regional regimes (which range from "competitive authoritarian" to "hegemonic" authoritarian), and the ability of their political machines to deliver the votes for UR.

Institutional explanations. Two groups of institutional features have been posited to explain variations in volatility: 1) *the type of electoral system*: proportional or majoritarian; the size of the electoral threshold and district magnitude; and changes in electoral rules. In Russia there have been many changes to the rules governing the electoral system. For elections to the Duma in 2003 and 2016 there was a mixed system with half of the seats elected in first past the post, single member districts, and the other half elected in PR elections with a 5% threshold. In 2007 and 2011 the SMD elections were abolished and the Duma was fully elected by a PR Party List system with a 7% threshold. Nevertheless, in both 2003 and 2016, Russia employed a 'parallel' sub-type of mixed electoral system, whereby the elections results are determined independently in both parts of the voting process. Because our study focuses only on the election results in the PR party list elections, our analysis will take into account changes to the Duma's electoral system. This will allow us to deal with any 'contamination effects', emanating from the single mandate races, on our results (Herron and Nishikawa, 2001; Moser and Scheiner, 2004).

2) *The properties of the party system itself*, such as ideological polarization, fragmentation, and institutionalization. (Roberts and Wibbels 1999). In polarized party systems 'the *ideological distances* between parties will be greater and this should make it more difficult for voters to shift from one party to another' (Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2012, p. 6). In contrast high degrees of

party system fragmentation will effect volatility in the opposite direction. More fragmented party systems facilitate volatility. However, if we examine the party system over the period 2003-2016, we find no significant changes in either the ideological distances between the parties or the levels of party system fragmentation. Firstly, the general configuration of the party system is similar over the whole period of our study: there is, 1) a dominant party of power – United Russia (which is statist and patriotic in its ideological orientations); 2) three "second order" parties, the so-called 'systemic opposition' – left-wing Communist Party of the Russian Federation (*Kommunisticheskaya Partiya Rossiiskoi Federatsiya*), populist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (*Liberal'no Demokraticheskaya Partiya Rossii*) and the ideologically ambivalent Just Russia (*Spravedlivaya Rossiya*); 3) some small parties such as Patriots of Russia (*Patrioty Rossii*), Yabloko (*Rossiiskaya Ob'edinennaya Demokraticheskaya Partiya*), Union of Right Forces (*Soyuz Pravykh Sil*), Right Cause (*Pravo Delo*), and many others which participate in elections, but never overcome the electoral thresholds. Secondly, in spite of the significant cross-regional differences in voting for UR this is not related to the levels of ideological polarization or party fragmentation. Even in those regions which deliver the lowest levels of electoral support for UR, the "party of power" still wins more votes than any of the other contestants. The minor parties are weak not only at the national level but also in all of the regions. Moreover, as Golosov has demonstrated, there are very high levels of party nationalization in the party-list contests (Golosov 2015). In other words, there are no substantial cross-regional variations in the general configuration of the party system in either the ideological or fragmentation dimensions. Consequently, for the purposes of our analysis these factors can therefore also be taken as constant, and thus can be omitted from our analysis.

Nevertheless, volatility can be stimulated not only by higher levels of fragmentation, but also the number of party alternatives presented to a voter. Though the fragmentation of a party system and number of parties participating in an election correlate with each other, these are not identical features. Whilst fragmentation reflects to a greater extent the results of voting ('demand

side'), the number of party alternatives concerns the range of choices presented to voters by elites ('supply side'). Whilst much of the literature on volatility puts the blame on the volatile voters, Tavits, in her study of parties in post-communist Central and Eastern Europe, demonstrates that, in fact, 'electoral volatility responds to, rather than triggers, party schisms and elite level manipulations of supply' (2008, p. 538). Moreover, as Birch notes, 'Most countries in the Eastern European region have followed a far more 'command economy' style development in which the supply of parties has been based primarily on the whim of élites with little reference to the demands, desires, or preferences of the electorate' (2003, p. 3)

A greater number of parties provide the voter with more choice even if the fragmentation of party system is fairly low as in the Russian case. Thus, 'we would expect there to be a linear relationship between the number of parties and electoral volatility' (Dejaeghere and Dassonneville, 2012, p. 6). In the Russian Federation legislative changes driven by the Kremlin concerning the rules governing the registration of parties and their participation in elections have led to a situation whereby their numbers have fluctuated widely. In 2003, 23 parties contested the Duma election, in 2007 this fell to 11, and there were 7 parties competing in 2011. Scores of new parties entered the electoral arena after new legislation was adopted in 2012 which made it much easier for parties to register with the Ministry of Justice. According to these amendments the number of party members required for registration was drastically reduced from 40,000 to 500, leading to the creation of over 70 parties by 2016. The number of parties contesting the 2016 Duma elections doubled from 7 in 2011 to 14. There has been far less variation in the number of candidates standing in presidential elections: there were 6 contenders in 2004, 4 in 2008, and 5 in 2012.

In addition, changes to the rules on registering for elections adopted in 2012 stipulated that party list candidates no longer needed to submit nomination signatures, and the maximum number of signatures required by independent candidates was lowered from 2% to 0.5%. In previous elections scores of opposition candidates and party lists were denied registration because the regional electoral commissions declared their nomination signatures invalid (see Ross 2011 and

2011a). These new election rules made it much easier for parties to register for elections. As a result of further changes to electoral legislation which were adopted in May 2014, the requirement of party list candidates to collect nomination signatures was reinstated, although the percentage of signatures required was lowered from 2% to 0.5% of the regional electorate, whilst for candidates in the single mandate elections, the number of required signatures was raised from 0.5 to 3%. Thus, in Russia the Kremlin's manipulation of election and party rules has been an important factor in determining which parties and candidates can contest elections (see Kynev, 2017).

The final feature of party systems is their *degree of party system institutionalization*. Highly institutionalized party systems 'will discourage electoral volatility by closing off the electoral marketplace, narrowing the range of viable alternatives, and socializing voters to embrace established partisan identities' (Roberts and Wibbels 1999, p. 578). Moreover, the age of the main parties will also have an impact on the degree of electoral volatility as 'older parties are likely to have deeper, more stable roots in society than younger ones' (Madrid 2005, p. 2). For UR, the critical period of its institutionalization was the period 2001-2007. By 2007 it had successfully penetrated the regions, and it was largely able to consolidate the key regional elites under its political umbrella. Consequently, we need to take the institutionalization variable into account only for the first electoral cycle (2003-2007), whilst for the following cycles (2007-2011 and 2011-2016) this factor can be taken as a constant.

Regime explanations**.** As noted above, we would stress that 'regime type' has a disproportionate influence in authoritarian regimes such as Russia. In this regard, Golosov makes the important point that economic growth or recession in authoritarian regimes may have a different impact than in democracies, where 'volatility has been linked to the extent to which voters hold their governments responsible for economic outcomes. Therefore, economic decay can cause increased voter volatility' (2016, p. 537). However, ruling parties in authoritarian regimes have been able 'to monopolize mass support even in the conditions when the national economy deteriorates' (Ibid). By tapping into their patronage networks and utilizing clientelistic forms of

exchange, which reward loyalty and punishes dissent, authoritarian regimes are able to 'survive economic hardship by making it inconsequential for election results' (Ibid, 539). Whilst Golosov has convincingly proved the validity of his argument in his large-N cross-country analysis, our study examines variations in the levels of volatility in just one country, the Russian Federation, which, as noted above, comprises different types of regional regimes. We hypothesize that volatility in the levels of support for UR will be lower in the most authoritarian regimes.

Furthermore, the institutionalization argument can be expanded to the wider political system and the political regime in general. Regardless of the type of political regime, stability leads to lower levels of electoral volatility. Thus, for example, Golosov in his study of authoritarian regimes notes that, 'Long-standing authoritarian regimes tend to create political settings in which all actors, including loyal quasi-opposition parties, tend to occupy stable – if not permanent – niches… thus, the stability of the political executive is negatively related to voter volatility' (2016, p. 544). Following Golosov we hypothesize that the stability of regional governments (regional governors) will inhibit voter volatility in authoritarian regimes.

Turnout. Electoral volatility will also depend on the stability of *turnout*. If we take, for example, a hypothetically 'normal' level of turnout, it is obvious that one part of the electorate will be members of the 'core electorate', whilst the other part will comprise the so called 'swing voters'. If we suppose that 'core voters' usually participate in elections, a change in turnout, all else been equal, will primarily be connected with a rise in the number of 'swing voters'. Consequently, this should be accompanied by a change in the levels of support for the parties.

Variables and Analysis

Our dependent variable is the modulus of change in the share of votes gained by UR or UR-Kremlin candidates between two consecutive elections (volatUR). The set of independent variables is drawn from the theories discussed above.

For the examination of the economic explanations of volatility we employed the variable 'change in the level of poverty' in the regions. The level of poverty is defined statistically as the

share the population with incomes below the subsistence minimum. We suggest that this indicator is much more accurate than the level of GDP per capita, or the average monthly salary, as the minimum cost of living (subsistence minimum) is defined by each subject of the Russian Federation separately, on the basis of the price of a local basket of standardized commodities. Thus, we calculated the modulus of change in the level of poverty between consecutive electoral cycles.

The next three variables are included in accordance with institutional explanations. The first variable captures the change in electoral system. For the purpose of this study, we need not measure all the nuances in electoral rules; it is sufficient to examine how the change of electoral system influences the volatility of UR's support. Therefore we use a very simple dichotomous variable that is assigned the value of '1' in the cases of change in electoral system (in 2007 and 2016 Duma elections) and '0' for 2011 elections.

The second variable examines 'change in the level of UR's institutionalization'. Since, as noted above, UR achieved a substantial degree of institutionalization by the time of the 2007 elections, we assume that there will be no significant changes in the value of this variable for the 2007-2011 and 2011-2016 cycles. Here, we also used a dichotomous variable that is assigned the value of '1' for 2003-2007 cycle (it denotes change in the degree of UR's institutionalization) and '0' for two other cycles (no change in the degree of UR's institutionalization).

The third variable concerns the number of party alternatives presented to a voter. This is based on the proposition that a change in the number of parties / candidates, increases volatility. Here we calculated the modulus of 'change in the number of parties / candidates', which participated in the elections.

It should be stressed that the variables in this group, unlike all the other variables, measure differences between electoral cycles, not between regions. As we take national elections, regions cannot vary in the values of these indicators. However, since we include in the analysis data on volatility in some electoral cycles, we need these variables to control for cross-cycle differences.

Two other variables are related to the features of regional regimes. The first examines variation in the degree of authoritarianism. It is not easy to find a good indicator for the measurement of this variable. One of the most prominent indexes – Petrov and Titkov's 'expert ratings of democratization of Russian regions' (Petrov and Titkov 2013) – is not appropriate for this study as it does not cover the complete time period. In addition, the methodology employed to calculate the degrees of democracy changed over time. For this reason, we have used the indicator, 'share of votes UR or UR-Kremlin candidates' obtain in the regions in the respective elections. These values have been weighted by national values because the values change between electoral cycles. It has to be stressed that weighted values differ to a sufficient degree from the absolute values; and this measurement allows us to avoid any proximity between the independent and dependent variables. We found no theoretical or empirical similarities, between, the variables, 'UR's / UR-Kremlin candidates' weighed share of votes, and change in the share of votes gained by UR or UR-Kremlin candidates between two consecutive elections' (dependent variable). Thus, the correlation coefficient is fairly low and takes the values '-0.157' and '-0.169' in Duma and presidential elections respectively.

Nevertheless, taking into account that the 'share of votes UR or UR-Kremlin candidates' is undoubtedly an approximate indicator, we need to subject it to a robust statistical check. Here we utilize the standard indicators - share of Russians and urban dwellers in the population of a region. As it was noted above, social cleavages theory is not relevant for the explanation of the volatility of UR support in Russian regions, but it has been argued that higher shares of non-Russians and rural dwellers in the regions facilitate greater degrees of administrative and authoritarian control over the electorate. It is therefore, not surprising that the shares of non-Russians and rural dwellers in a region strongly correlates with voting for UR (the values of correlation coefficients are 0.708 and 0.511 respectively). Consequently, although these variables, as such, are not the indicators of the degree of authoritarianism, they can be considered as

'facilitators of authoritarian rule' and therefore may be used as substitutes for the 'share of votes UR or UR-Kremlin candidates.'

For the measurement of the stability of a regional regime we use as an approximation, the variable, a 'change of governor' in the period between consecutive elections. In the context of regional authoritarianism, where clientelistic exchanges between regional elites and citizens are the norm, we would surmise that a change of governor will have a destabilizing effect on a regional regime. That is why we include a dichotomous variable which is assigned the value of '1', if a governor was changed between electoral cycles, and '0', if there was no replacement of a governor.

Finally, taking into account the fact that turnout can influence volatility, 'change in turnout' is considered as a control variable. Here, we calculated the modulus of change in turnout rates between consecutive elections.

All the independent variables and sources of the data are summarized in Table 2.

[Table 2 about here]

Hypothesis

1. Higher rates of change in the in the level of poverty in the regions will increase the levels of volatility for UR / UR-Kremlin candidates.

2. Change in electoral system will increase the levels of volatility for UR / UR-Kremlin candidates.

3. Substantial change in the degree of UR's institutionalization will increase the levels of volatility for UR / UR-Kremlin candidates.

4. Change in number of parties / candidates participating in elections will increase the levels of volatility for UR / UR-Kremlin candidates.

5. In more authoritarian regimes the value of volatility will be lower.

6. The more stable the political situation in a region the lower the value of volatility for UR / UR-Kremlin candidates.

7. Higher changes in turnout increase the levels of volatility of support for UR / UR-Kremlin candidates.

Since our statistics are a type of panel data (3 time series values of volatUR_Duma and 2 time series values of volatUR_Pres across 83 regions), we use linear mixed modelling. For this study, the fixed effects model is likely to be more appropriate in comparison to the random effects model, as all the regions of the Russian Federation are included in the sample so that the selection cannot be regarded as random. Each region has its own unique features; and the effects specific to the unit of analysis are correlated with the independent variables. The results of the fixed effects models are presented in Tables 3-5.

For the analysis we use several models. As it was noted above, we need a robust check for the measurement of the degree of authoritarianism through the variable URvote. For that purpose, the shares of Russians and urban dwellers are used, therefore additional models for each of these are required. Furthermore, since 'Change Number of Parties' correlates with 'Change Electoral System' and 'Change UR Institutionalization' to a great extent (in both cases Spearman coefficient = 0.866), we include these variables in the separate models in order to avoid multicollinearity. That explains why we develop 6 different models as presented in Table 3. Model 1-3 include 'Change Number of Parties' while models 4-6 include both 'Change UR Institutionalization' and 'Change Electoral System'.

[Tables 3 about here]

The analysis confirms some of our hypothesis. According to our theoretical expectations, both 'economic' and 'type of regime' predictors clearly influence on the volatility of UR's support in Russian regions. Volatility increases as the 'change in poverty' rises. More authoritarian regimes will have lower levels of volatility for UR. Also, a change in number of parties participating in the elections entails volatility in voting for UR. Finally, change in the degree of institutionalization of UR facilitates volatility.

It has to be noted that the influence of Change in Poverty, Number of parties, and Degree of Institutionalization of the Volatility of UR's support remains the same, even if we replace the variable 'Voting for UR' by 'Share of Russians' or 'Share of Urban population'. Consequently, this proves the veracity of our results. Although it has to be noted, that while 'Share of Russians' has a statistically significant coefficient, the 'Share of Urban population' does not.

At the same time, the analysis demonstrates that changes in electoral system, which took place in the 2007 and 2016 Duma elections, does not increase volatility. On the contrary, volatility reduces. This unexpected result can be explained by the fact that in both cases UR changed the electoral rules clearly to its own benefit. Next, contrary to our expectation, the regional regime stability variable ('Change Governor') had persistently statistically insignificant coefficients. This means, that in the context of Putin's 'power vertical', in most cases a change of a governor, does not destabilize the regional regime to such a degree that that the regional political machine is not able deliver a majority of the votes for UR. Furthermore, even if regional elite groups are restructured in the context of the appointment of a new governor, when it comes to federal elections, they will usually forget their internal conflicts and solidify their support for UR. Finally, the coefficients for the values of the variable 'Change Turnout' are unstable which means that our expectation concerning the influence of turnout on UR's volatility is not proved.

Although two of the three predictors of the 'degree of authoritarianism' (the direct measure URvote and 'authoritarianism facilitator' ShareRus) have very high and statistically significant coefficients, it may be the case that the high value for these variables may be distorted by the influence of the group of regions which can be classified as 'hegemonic authoritarian' – the 10 'national republics' (Bashkortostan, Chechnya, Chukotka, Dagestan, Ingushetiya, Kabardino-Balkariya, Karachaevo-Cherkessiya, Mordoviya, Tatarstan, Tuva) and Kemerovo oblast'. These regions usually produce much higher than average levels of support for UR. In order to test, to what extent this group of regions distorted the results in models 1-6, they are excluded from the

analysis in models 7-12. Such modification and the juxtaposition of these models allows us to make the second robust test of our results.

[Tables 4 about here]

Here we find that the changes to the original set of units of observation do not substantially change the results. Economic factors remain important, with the exception of Models 10-12 where 'Change Poverty' lost its statistical significance. The influence of the type of regional regime, change in number of parties, change in the degree of UR's institutionalization also has similar coefficients. As in models 1-6, the coefficients of the variable of 'Change in Turnout' are unstable; also those for 'Change Governor' are statistically insignificant. Again, we found that changes in the electoral system influenced the volatility of UR's support in the opposite direction to our expectations from the theoretical literature. Thus, we can conclude that our results are fairly robust.

Finally, we juxtapose the results of the analysis of Duma elections with presidential elections. For the analysis of volatility of support for UR-Kremlin candidates in presidential elections, it is possible to use the same data as for the Duma elections, since the distances in time between the 2003, 2007, and 2011 Duma elections, and the 2004, 2008 and 2012 presidential elections are very short (a few months). Two variables – 'Change in UR Institutionalization' and 'Change in Electoral System' – are not applicable for the analysis of presidential elections, since the first doesn't directly concern Presidents, and the presidential electoral system was basically unchanged over the period of our study. For that reason in Models 13-15, the same set of predictors as in Models 1-3 was included, and we can compare Models 13-15 with Models 1-3. In a similar vein, we use Models 16-18 which excludes the 11 most authoritarian regions, thus allowing a comparison with Models 7-9.

[Tables 5 about here]

Looking at the results of our analysis of the presidential elections, we find, first of all, that the values of the coefficients of the economic regressor (Change Poverty) lose their significance, whereas 'Turnout' becomes a significant predictor, having positive coefficients, which accords

with our expectations. On the contrary, 'Candidates number' saves its importance but changes its sign which contradicts our theoretical expectations. Regional regime stability predictors (Governor Change) are once again not significant. The only variable that stays the same is 'Authoritarianism'.

Conclusion

The main finding of our study is that "regime-type" or more precisely "authoritarianism" is the key explanatory variable. Authoritarianism remains significant over most of our models which confirms our hypothesis. This conclusion is in line with the results of Golosov's (2016) cross-national study of electoral volatility. Stronger authoritarian rulers are able to control regional elites and ensure the best results for UR and its candidates by exerting administrative pressure on the voters. This reduces the level of volatility in voting for UR and its candidates. Softer regional regimes are characterized by greater degrees of intra-elite competitiveness that results in weaker administrative pressure. In this context, voting for UR and its candidates become more susceptible to the influence of various external factors, and this leads to an increase in the volatility of support for UR.

Another interesting finding of our study is that stability of the executive (regional governors) is not an important factor for volatility, in either the Duma or presidential elections. It does not have a significant coefficient in any of the models. At first glance, this would appear to be contrary to Golosov's (2016) findings, however, his study entails a large-N cross-country comparison of party systems, whilst we compare regional variations in volatility within just one country, and for a single party. It appears that in the context of the Kremlin's 'power vertical', a change of governor does not prevent regional machines from "bringing home the votes" for UR, which is perceived as a litmus test of a region's loyalty to the Kremlin, and this factor explains why the stability variables in our study are not significant.

Our study produces convincing evidence that there are substantial differences between the Duma and presidential elections. First of all, we find a clear trend in the levels of volatility for UR in the Duma elections which see a steady fall over the period of the study (see Table 6). However,

this is not the case for presidential elections, although we have to take into account the fact that the level of volatility in presidential elections is fairly low, so that it would be wrong to make any firm conclusions about clear trends.

[Table 6 about here]

However, we would draw attention to the relatively low level of volatility as such, which shows that voting in presidential elections differs from Duma elections. It has to be said, that Russian presidential elections are perceived by many citizens through a 'personal prism.' As a result, Putin who is very popular, and in 2008 – his handpicked successor, Medvedev, have consistently won many more votes than the "party of power". Furthermore, our results show that in presidential elections the economic explanation for volatility does not count. This is because in Russia most voters have not considered the candidate's economic records to be the most important factor. Additionally, a change in the number of candidates influences volatility in the opposite direction to our theoretical expectations. This can be explained by the fact that opposition candidates have not been considered by a majority of voters as viable alternatives to Putin or Medvedev. Both of these findings correspond with the thesis that presidential elections in Russia may be considered more as referendums on the personal characteristics of the candidates, than a judgment on the policies and economic performance of UR.

In this sense, Duma elections demonstrate very different results. We find that economic factors and the number of competing parties matter. Consequently, both economic and institutional explanations of volatility have significance, at least partially, in Duma elections, in contrast to presidential elections. This would suggest that in Duma elections UR is perceived by the electorate as a ruling party which is responsible for economic policy. Consequently, we find a positive relationship between changes in social and economic conditions and volatility in voting for UR. These essential differences between the Duma and presidential elections explain the lack of correlation between the average values of volatility in Duma and presidential elections, which is displayed in Figure 2. Nevertheless, the positive relationship between a change in the social and

economic conditions and volatility in voting for UR, is obscured by the high levels of mobilization of the electorate in authoritarian regimes. In other words, in Russia, "regime type" is a better predictor of electoral volatility that the 'classic' economic and institutional variables discussed above.

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Table 1. Voting for UR and Kremlin candidates in Russian regions: 2003-2016 (in %) and average values of volatility of support

	UR 2003	UR 2007	UR 2011	UR 2016	Putin 2004	Medvedev 2008	Putin 2012	Average volatility of UR on Duma elections	Average volatility of UR-Kremlin candidates on Pres. elections
National Results	**37.40**	**64.30**	**49.32**	**54.20**	**71.31**	**70.28**	**63.53**		
1. Adygeya	51.30	70.97	60.21	59.45	76.42	69.77	64.04	0.1040	0.0619
2. Altay krai	29.60	54.69	37.17	35.20	67.64	60.35	57.33	0.1486	0.0516
3. Altay rep.	26.40	69.46	53.33	48.81	75.03	73.82	66.85	0.2124	0.0409
4. Amur	32.30	69.75	43.53	37.90	64.87	63.62	62.80	0.2310	0.0104
5. Archangelsk	37.90	56.72	31.90	44.50	77.45	66.98	57.92	0.1875	0.0977
6. Astrakhan	31.70	58.01	60.17	42.20	66.08	75.28	68.65	0.1548	0.0792
7. Bashkortostan	38.90	83.12	70.50	56.40	91.78	88.01	75.22	0.2365	0.0828
8. Belgorod	33.10	65.39	51.16	54.70	54.82	68.96	59.30	0.1669	0.1190
9. Bryansk	34.70	61.77	50.12	63.90	63.57	61.82	63.89	0.1750	0.0191
10. Buryatiya	34.70	65.59	49.02	43.34	66.58	70.84	66.18	0.1771	0.0446
11. Chechnya	79.80	99.36	99.48	96.30	92.30	88.70	99.76	0.0762	0.0733
12. Chelyabinsk	33.80	61.11	50.28	38.20	70.18	65.63	64.94	0.1674	0.0262
13. Chukotka	54.40	78.13	70.32	58.80	87.24	81.41	72.40	0.1435	0.0742
14. Chuvashiya	37.30	62.27	43.42	50.90	67.12	66.48	62.31	0.1710	0.0241
15. Dagestan	65.90	89.19	91.44	88.90	94.61	91.92	92.82	0.0936	0.0180
16. Ingushetiya	57.00	98.72	90.96	72.41	98.18	91.66	91.91	0.2268	0.0339
17. Irkutsk	32.80	58.69	34.93	39.80	61.96	61.24	55.43	0.1817	0.0327

18.	Ivanovo	33.60	60.76	40.12	42.40	67.21	64.92	61.77	0.1669	0.0272
19.	Jewish AO	42.20	66.22	48.11	45.00	67.87	67.39	61.59	0.1508	0.0314
20.	Kabardino-Balkariya	77.00	96.12	81.91	77.71	96.49	88.80	77.63	0.1251	0.0943
21.	Kaliningrad	32.00	57.38	37.07	43.40	69.86	62.09	52.53	0.1734	0.0867
22.	Kalmykiya	50.70	72.70	66.10	70.60	79.23	71.56	70.28	0.1103	0.0448
23.	Kaluga	35.10	61.65	40.42	45.70	70.16	65.54	58.99	0.1769	0.0559
24.	Kamchatka	35.00	68.35	45.25	46.70	71.82	69.39	59.82	0.1930	0.0600
25.	Karachaevo-Cherkessiya	49.60	92.90	89.84	81.70	82.28	90.35	91.36	0.1817	0.0454
26.	Kareliya	37.90	57.28	32.26	37.30	74.14	67.25	55.36	0.1648	0.0939
27.	Kemerovo	52.10	76.86	64.24	77.30	71.51	70.51	77.12	0.1681	0.0381
28.	Khabarovsk	34.30	60.67	38.14	37.30	64.52	64.12	56.13	0.1658	0.0420
29.	Khakasiya	30.40	59.53	40.13	38.10	61.41	60.47	58.36	0.1685	0.0153
30.	Khanty-Mansi AO	41.30	65.95	41.01	47.60	74.84	66.68	66.39	0.1873	0.0423
31.	Kirov	32.90	55.38	34.90	38.00	65.52	76.29	57.90	0.1535	0.1458
32.	Komi	33.00	62.06	58.81	37.80	73.59	71.74	64.93	0.1777	0.0433
33.	Kostroma	34.10	56.35	30.74	36.60	69.22	62.44	52.76	0.1791	0.0823
34.	Krasnodar	37.10	61.89	56.15	59.30	67.37	75.06	63.66	0.1123	0.0955
35.	Krasnoyarsk	29.90	60.67	36.70	40.40	60.31	62.47	60.10	0.1948	0.0227
36.	Kurgan	33.60	64.43	44.41	41.50	66.94	64.93	63.37	0.1792	0.0179
37.	Kursk	30.10	62.74	45.72	51.70	65.24	64.27	60.43	0.1855	0.0241
38.	Leningrad Oblast	38.10	59.23	33.54	50.00	77.10	70.19	61.85	0.2109	0.0763
39.	Lipetsk	28.20	62.30	40.09	56.20	63.62	65.84	60.99	0.2414	0.0354
40.	Magadan	34.40	55.24	41.04	44.70	70.05	63.07	56.22	0.1290	0.0692

41.	Marii El	34.60	67.54	52.24	46.70	67.30	77.22	59.96	0.1793	0.1359
42.	Mordoviya	76.10	93.41	91.62	84.40	91.35	90.31	86.99	0.0877	0.0218
43.	Moscow	34.10	54.15	46.62	37.80	68.61	71.52	46.76	0.1213	0.1384
44.	Moscow Oblast	33.60	59.76	33.10	46.00	71.12	70.41	56.73	0.2191	0.0720
45.	Murmansk	39.20	55.11	32.02	42.00	74.04	65.26	59.85	0.1633	0.0710
46.	Nenets AO	38.70	48.78	36.04	41.10	76.90	61.54	57.04	0.0929	0.0993
47.	Nizhegorod Oblast	32.00	60.63	44.55	58.10	65.88	61.84	63.77	0.1942	0.0299
48.	North Ossetiya	46.70	71.78	67.90	67.10	91.25	73.35	69.97	0.0992	0.1064
49.	Novgorod	37.10	63.13	34.58	40.10	71.74	65.81	57.88	0.2003	0.0693
50.	Novosibirsk	28.90	59.07	33.84	38.30	63.10	61.90	56.31	0.1995	0.0340
51.	Omsk	32.70	60.14	39.61	36.30	67.03	63.04	55.50	0.1709	0.0577
52.	Orenburg	27.60	60.31	34.89	40.90	58.79	60.81	56.88	0.2138	0.0298
53.	Oryol	44.60	59.85	38.99	47.90	61.66	66.38	52.82	0.1501	0.0914
54.	Penza	45.10	70.31	56.30	64.30	64.56	71.40	64.26	0.1574	0.0699
55.	Perm	30.70	62.06	36.28	42.70	72.75	67.30	62.92	0.2119	0.0492
56.	Primorsky krai	27.50	54.87	32.99	39.00	59.37	63.84	57.07	0.1842	0.0562
57.	Pskov	37.10	56.73	36.65	45.10	70.79	70.16	59.63	0.1605	0.0558
58.	Rostov	39.00	71.90	50.22	58.80	72.49	76.94	62.61	0.2105	0.0939
59.	Ryazan	31.70	57.10	39.79	54.50	73.22	60.82	59.70	0.1914	0.0676
60.	Sakhalin	30.10	62.96	41.91	45.40	68.41	63.52	56.28	0.1913	0.0607
61.	Samara	32.60	56.08	39.37	50.80	63.28	64.08	58.53	0.1721	0.0318
62.	Saratov	44.30	64.81	64.89	68.20	70.79	75.62	70.50	0.0797	0.0498
63.	Smolensk	37.30	53.92	36.23	48.10	64.91	59.26	56.68	0.1539	0.0412

64.	St Petersburg	31.80	50.33	35.35	39.70	75.12	72.27	58.56	0.1262	0.0828
65.	Stavropol	32.00	62.20	49.11	54.30	64.54	64.79	64.43	0.1616	0.0031
66.	Sverdlovsk Oblast	34.10	62.04	32.71	40.50	76.34	68.98	64.48	0.2169	0.0593
67.	Tambov	29.00	59.79	66.66	63.50	63.62	72.51	71.65	0.1361	0.0488
68.	Tatarstan	59.50	81.07	77.83	85.30	82.58	79.24	82.67	0.1076	0.0339
69.	Tomsk	34.00	58.41	37.51	40.70	67.15	64.12	57.05	0.1617	0.0505
70.	Tula	29.90	61.72	61.32	53.00	65.50	67.80	67.68	0.1351	0.0121
71.	Tuva	66.80	89.00	85.29	82.60	87.53	89.32	89.99	0.0953	0.0123
72.	Tver	34.50	59.71	38.44	45.00	70.59	67.57	57.99	0.1768	0.0630
73.	Tyumen	49.70	73.57	62.21	58.40	73.59	78.88	73.04	0.1301	0.0557
74.	Udmurtiya	42.10	60.57	45.09	50.50	75.97	70.46	65.74	0.1312	0.0512
75.	Ulyanovsk	34.00	66.24	43.56	48.50	65.91	66.93	58.15	0.1995	0.0490
76.	Vladimir	30.40	56.75	38.27	45.20	68.83	64.05	53.47	0.1725	0.0768
77.	Volgograd	28.90	57.74	35.48	50.60	63.03	62.27	63.37	0.2207	0.0093
78.	Vologda	38.90	60.47	33.40	37.20	75.77	68.64	59.39	0.1748	0.0819
79.	Voronezh	25.90	56.97	50.05	58.70	65.28	66.27	61.31	0.1555	0.0298
80.	Yakutiya	38.90	63.99	49.16	46.40	69.76	67.78	69.41	0.1423	0.0181
81.	Yamalo-Nenets AO	45.80	79.35	71.68	67.10	84.50	83.86	84.50	0.1527	0.0064
82.	Yaroslavl	35.60	53.17	29.04	38.40	70.81	63.58	54.48	0.1702	0.0817
83.	Zabaikal’skii krai	38.10	62.75	43.28	39.90	72.49	65.81	65.64	0.1583	0.0343

Source: Official website of the Central Election Commission: http://www.cikrf.ru (last accessed 21 March 2017).

Figure 1: Cross-regional variation in support for UR in Duma elections

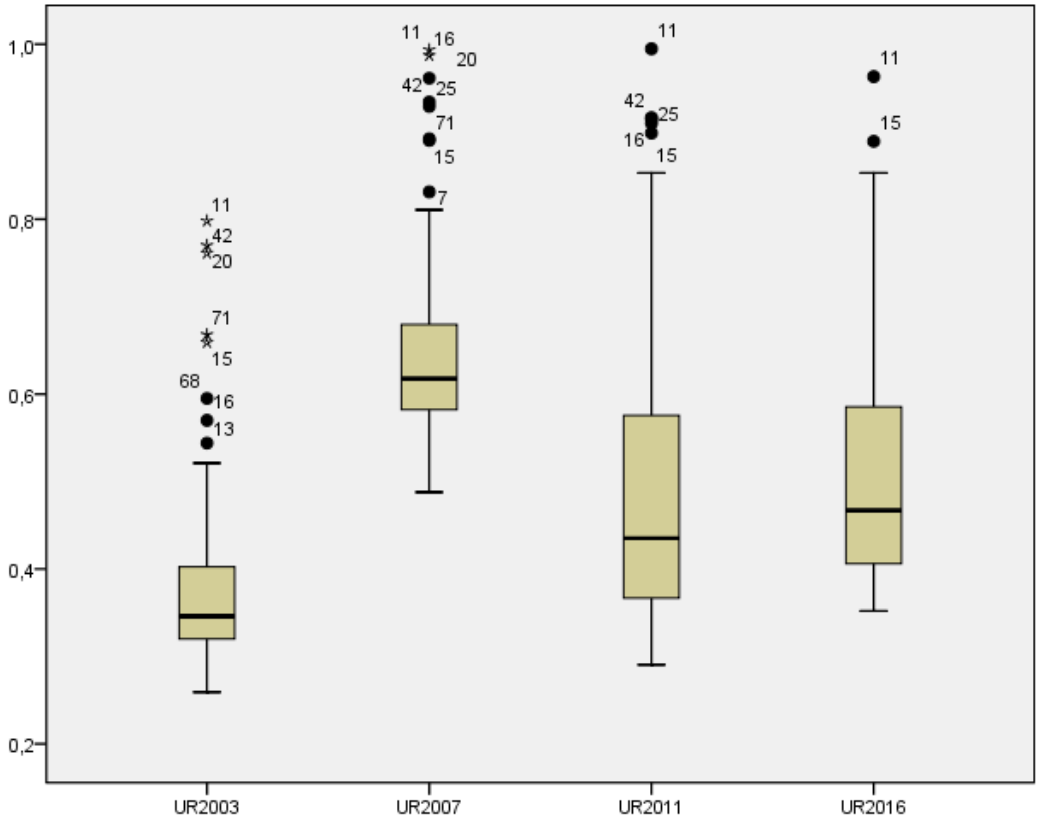

Figure 2. Cross-regional variation in support for Kremlin candidates in presidential elections

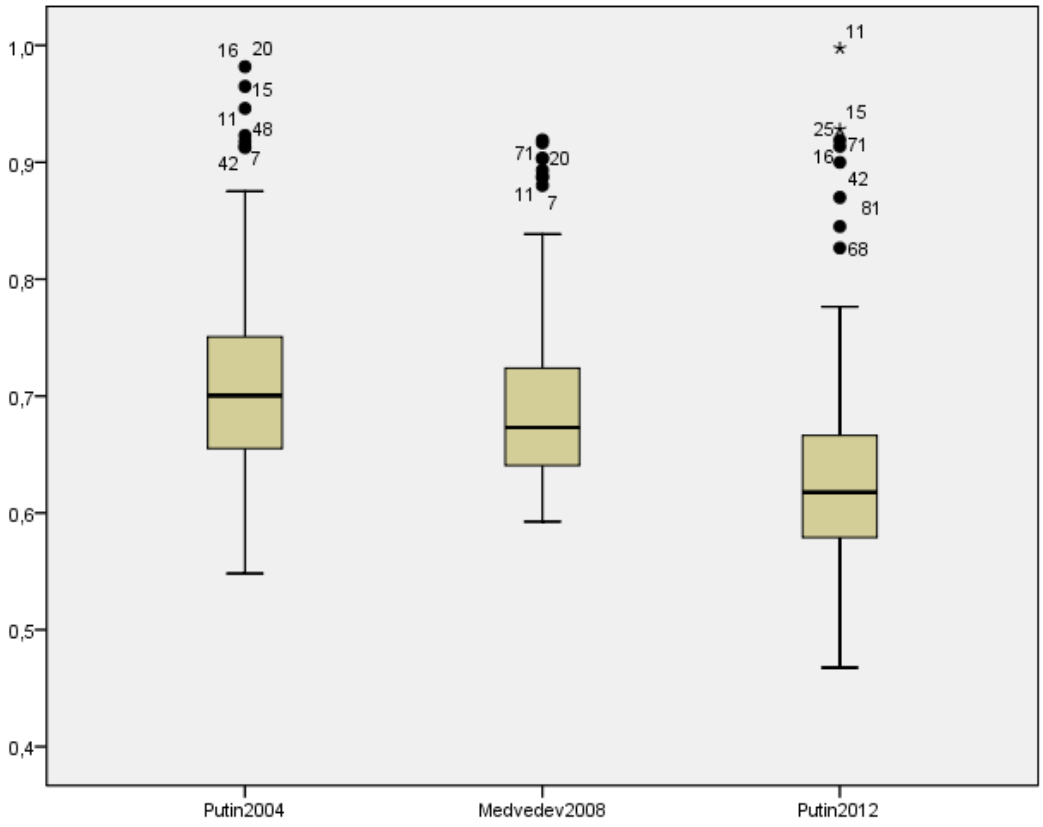

Figure 3. Cross-regional variations in the average values of volatility

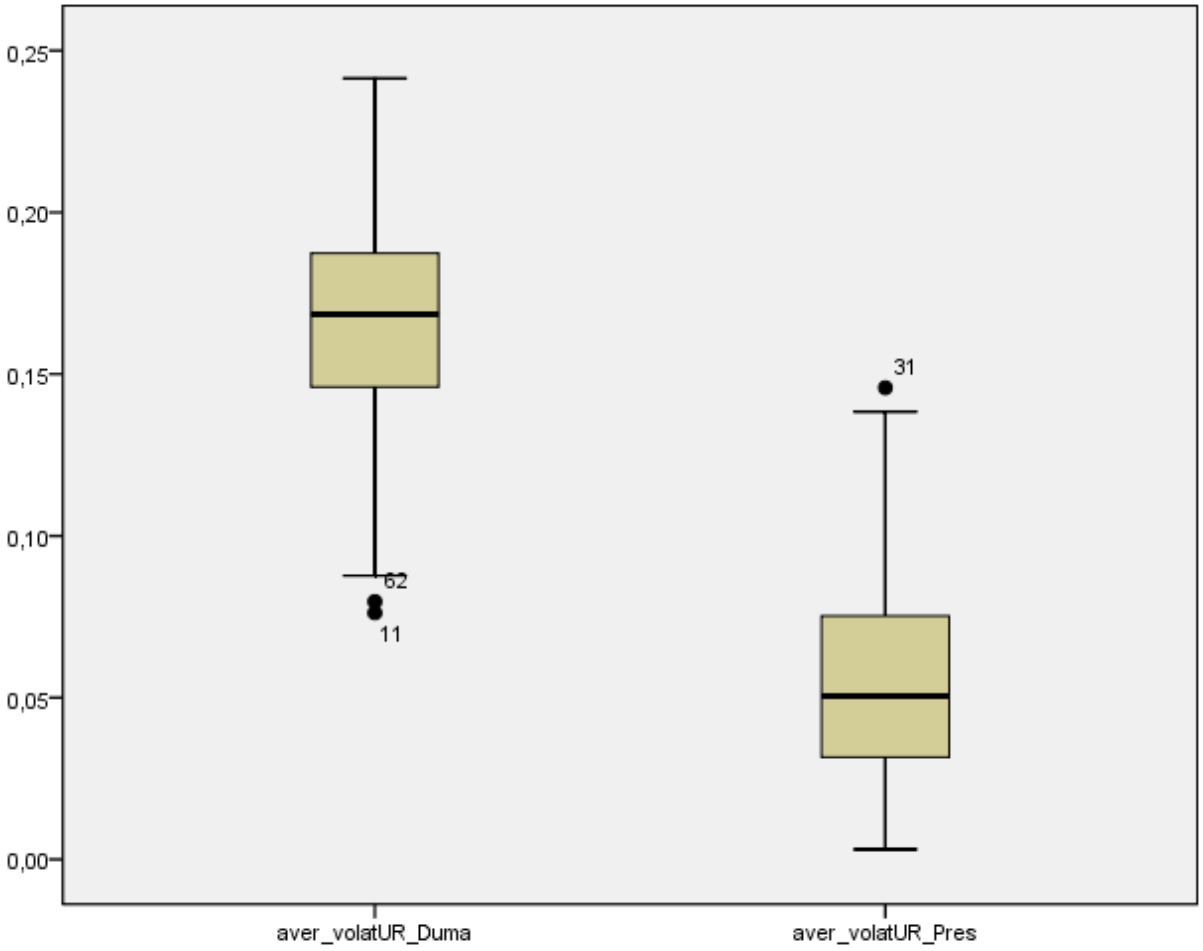
0,25
0,20
0,15
0,10
0,05
0,00
62
11
31
aver_volatUR_Duma
aver_volatUR_Pres

Figure 4. The correlation between average values of volatility in Duma and presidential elections (the numbers of the cases are the same as in Table 1)

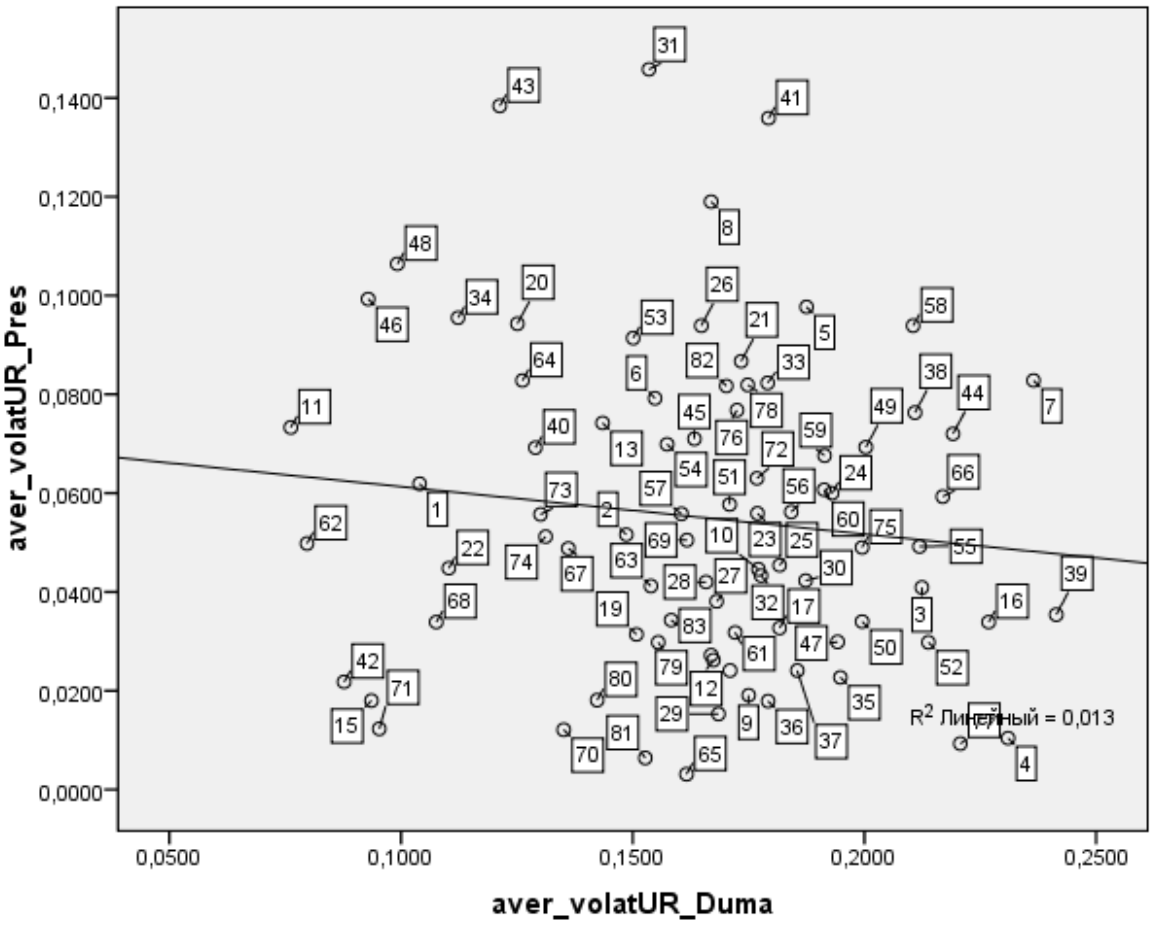

Table 2. Independent variables

Variables	Name	Sources
Change in the level of poverty Modulus of change in share of the population with incomes below the subsistence minimum between two consecutive elections	Change Poverty	Calculated by the authors on the basis of: *Regiony Rossii: Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie Pokazateli 2010* (Moskva: Rosstat, 2010). Table 5.11; *Regiony Rossii: Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie Pokazateli 2016* (Moskva: Rosstat, 2016). Table 4.16
Change in electoral system Dichotomous variable (0 = no changes; 1 = changes)	Change Electoral System	2007 = '1' 2011 = '0' 2016 = '1'
Change in the level of UR's institutionalization Dichotomous variable (0 = no changes; 1 = changes)	Change UR Institutionalization	2007 = '1' 2011 = '0' 2016 = '0'
Change in number of parties / candidates Modulus of change in the number of parties, which participate in elections, between two consecutive elections	Change Number of Parties / Candidates	Compiled from the information provided on the Russian Central Electoral Commission Website (http://www.cikf.ru).
Degree of authoritarianism Share of votes UR or UR-Kremlin candidates obtain in the respective elections (weighted by national values)	URvote	Calculated by the authors from the information provided on the Russian Central Electoral Commission Website (http://www.cikf.ru).
Facilitator of authoritarianism-1 Share of Russians in the population of a region	RusShare	*Vserossiiskaya Perepis' Naseleniya 2010*. Table 'National composition of the RF population', available at: http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/perepis_itogi1612.htm, accessed 8 December, 2017.
Facilitator of authoritarianism-2 Share of urban population in the regions in the year of elections. Since the values change, it has been weighted by national values	UrbanShare	Calculated by the authors on the basis of: *Regiony Rossii: Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie Pokazateli 2010* (Moskva: Rosstat, 2010). Table 3.3; *Regiony Rossii: Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie Pokazateli 2016* (Moskva: Rosstat, 2016). Table 2.3
Change of governor Stability of tenure of a governor during the electoral cycle before the elections - dichotomous variable (0 = no change; 1 = governor changed)	Change Governor	Calculated by the authors
Change in turnout Modulus of change in turnout between two consecutive elections	Change Turnout	Calculated by the authors from the information provided on the Russian Central Electoral Commission Website (http://www.cikf.ru).

Table 3. Fixed effect models: Duma elections (all cases)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)
Constant	0.253*** (0.019)	-0.090*** (0.022)	-0.100*** (0.029)	0.327*** (0.018)	0.201*** (0.020)	0.221*** (0.028)
Change Poverty	**0.411*** (0.091)**	**0.575*** (0.102)**	**0.554*** (0.105)**	**0.213** (0.089)**	**0.188** (0.090)**	**0.158* (0.094)**
Change Governor	-0.008 (0.009)	-0.012 (0.009)	-0.010 (0.009)	-0.008 (0.007)	-0.006 (0.007)	-0.005 (0.007)
Change Turnout	**0,135** (0,067)**	-0,008 (0,065)	-0,002 (0,064)	**0,118** (0,058)**	**0,132** (0,056)**	**0,135** (0,056)**
URvote	**-0.163*** (0.016)**			**-0.101*** (0.015)**		
RusShare		**0.035* (0.019)**			**0.034** (0.016)**	
UrbanShare			0,030 (0,027)			0.010 (0.023)
Change Number of Parties / Candidates	**0.009*** (0.001)**	**0.020*** (0.002)**	**0.021*** (0.002)**			
Change UR Institutionalization				**0.184*** (0.012)**	**0.180*** (0.011)**	**0.183*** (0.016)**
Change Electoral System				**-0.101*** (0.009)**	**-0.097*** (0.010)**	**-0.098*** (0.011)**
AIC	-522.100	-500.715	-499.480	-657.004	-643.939	-640.742
N	249	249	249	249	249	249
Significance	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01					

Table 4. Fixed effect models: Duma elections (without the most authoritarian regions)

	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12
	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)
Constant	0.336*** (0.021)	0.055* (0.031)	0.059 (0.037)	0.392*** (0.024)	0.207*** (0.022)	0.240*** (0.029)
Change Poverty	**0.351*** (0.108)**	**0.487*** (0.118)**	**0.587*** (0.126)**	0.122 (0.108)	0.135 (0.106)	0.152 (0.108)
Change Governor	-0.003 (0.008)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.005 (0.011)	0.000 (0.008)	0.003 (0.008)	0.005 (0.008)
Change Turnout	**0,117* (0,069)**	-0,040 (0,084)	-0,091 (0,084)	0,078 (0,061)	0,097 (0,061)	**0,107* (0,061)**
URvote	**-0.248*** (0.023)**			**-0.156*** (0.022)**		
RusShare		0.041 (0.030)			**0.042** (0.021)**	
UrbanShare			0.013 (0.034)			0.001 (0.024)
Change Number of Parties / Candidates	**0.009*** (0.001)**	**0.010*** (0.002)**	**0.010*** (0.002)**			
Change UR Institutionalization				**0.201*** (0.013)**	**0.188*** (0.012)**	**0.188*** (0.012)**
Change Electoral System				**-0.115*** (0.009)**	**-0.113*** (0.010)**	**-0.114*** (0.011)**
AIC	-467.358	-438.276	-436.783	-600.372	-590.949	-587.481
N	216	216	216	216	216	216
Significance	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01					

Table 5. Fixed effect models: Presidential elections

	Model 13	Model 14	Model 15	Model 16	Model 17	Model 18
	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)	Est (St.Er.)
Constant	0.108*** (0.018)	0.067*** (0.015)	0.051** (0.022)	0.125*** (0.023)	0.082*** (0.022)	0.059** (0.025)
Change Poverty	0.023 (0.059)	-0.009 (0.060)	0.011 (0.063)	0.024 (0.076)	0.008 (0.077)	0.027 (0.080)
Change Governor	0.007 (0.006)	0.007 (0.007)	0.007 (0.007)	0.008 (0.007)	0.009 (0.007)	0.008 (0.007)
Change Turnout	**0,156** (0,066)**	**0,143** (0,067)**	**0,147** (0,067)**	**0,147** (0,073)**	0,117 (0,009)	**0,124** (0,073)**
Change Number of Parties / Candidates	**-0.017** (0.008)**	**-0.015** (0.008)**	**-0.016** (0.008)**	**-0.015** (0.009)**	**-0.017** (0.009)**	**-0.019** (0.009)**
URvote	**-0.036** (0.014)**			**-0.056** (0.023)**		
RusShare		0.008 (0.014)			-0.003 (0.020)	
UrbanShare			0.024 (0.020)			0.021 (0.023)
AIC	-547.097	-540.793	-542.641	-471.424	-465.492	-466.502
N	166	166	166	144	144	144
Significance	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01					

Table 6. Volatility of UR's share of the votes: national and regional levels (summed)

	2007 to 2003	2011 to 2007	2016 to 2011
Volatility of UR's share of the vote in Duma elections: national results	0.2673	0.1501	0.0491
Volatility of UR's share of the vote in Duma elections: summing values of volatility in the regions (sum of all regions)	21.8444	13.4209	5.7737
	2008 to 2004	2012 to 2008	
Volatility of UR's share of the vote in presidential elections: national results	0.0103	0.0675	
Volatility of UR's share of the vote in presidential elections: aggregate values of volatility in the regions (sum of all regions)	3.9506	5.1899	